

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated June 23, 2010. Appreciation is expressed to the Examiner for the allowance of claims 34, 35, 46 and 47 and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 40 and 41.

By the present amendment, each of the rejected independent claims has been amended to further clarify the invention in accordance with discussions conducted with the Examiner during a telephone interview with Exr. Mai on June 9, 2010. The substance of this interview has been noted in the Statement of Substance of Interview dated June 18, 2010, prior to the mailing date of the current Office Action. Based upon these amendments to the rejected independent claims 31, 32, 33, 36, 37, 43, 44, 45, and 48, reconsideration and allowance of these amended independent claims, and their respective dependent claims, is also respectfully requested. More specifically, reconsideration and removal of the 35 USC §103 rejections against these claims based on the primary reference to Tanaka (USP 6,781,669) considered either alone or in combination with the secondary references to Tsuruta (USP 6,608,745), Motoaki (JP 62-211363), Machida (USP 4,848,536), Hiramatsu (USPub. 2003/0044653) or Kholodenko (USP 6,490,145) is respectfully requested.

More specifically, turning to the rejected independent claims, each of these claims has been amended to define:

"said electrostatic chuck further comprising means for mounting the rectangular substrate on the electrostatic chuck so that said rectangular substrate and said electrostatic chuck can be moved together, with the substrate fixed immovably to the electrostatic chuck, through a plurality of treatment stations. "

This corresponds to the feature of the present invention noted in the June 9, 2010 interview, as discussed on page 3 of the June 18, 2010 Statement of Summary of Interview. Specifically, as noted in paragraph [0019] of the published application U.S. Ser. No. 2006/0164786:

"Various in-line treatments are performed while a substrate stage 9 mounted with the substrate G is conveyed to positions 9B, 9C, 9D, 9E and 9F in zones A-D successively in that order in a transfer direction of an endless substrate conveyance mechanism 8 having a return loop."

In further regard to this, paragraph [0024] notes that the present invention is directed to:

"an electrostatic chuck 10 for a substrate stage for attracting and retaining the substrate G according to the present invention."

As such, each of the rejected independent claims now clearly defines the feature that the rectangular substrate and the electrostatic chuck are moved together, with the substrate fixed to the electrostatic chuck, through the plurality of treatment stations such as shown in Fig. 1.

Turning to the primary reference to Tanaka, on the other hand, relied on in the Office Action with regard to the claimed series of rod-like electrodes, it is quite clear that the substrate moves by itself over the series of rod-like electrodes. This is a completely different arrangement than that defined by the amended independent claims since, in Tanaka, the substrate moves relative to the rod-like electrodes, whereas, in the present invention, the substrate is fixed immovably to the rod-like electrodes so that both the substrate and the electrostatic chuck can be moved together. In light of the clarification of the rejected independent claims to emphasize this distinction over Tanaka, reconsideration and allowance of each of the amended independent claims is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration and allowance of the dependent claims is also respectfully requested. In each case, these claims serve to define further overall combinations neither taught nor suggested by the cited prior art.

Still further, reconsideration and allowance of new dependent claims 49-52 is also respectfully requested. These claims depend on the allowed parent independent claims, 34, 35, 46 and 47, respectively. In addition, these claims also define the above-noted feature, added to each of the rejected independent claims, concerning the arrangement of the present invention for moving the substrate and the electrostatic chuck together through a series of treatment stations. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this serves to provide an even further distinction over the cited prior art.

If the Examiner believes that there are any other points which may be clarified or otherwise disposed of either by telephone discussion or by personal interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Docket No. 1113.45730X00), and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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